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~~SECRET SPOKE~~

CATEGORY = 1

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~~SECRET SPOKE~~ DIRNSA CRITIC FOLLOW UP NR ONE AND FINAL TO USA-29 CRITIC 12-72 18/2214Z DEC ON 18 DECEMBER BETWEEN 2212Z AND 2221Z SIGINT REFLECTED A MINIMUM OF 12 U.S. B-52 AND 26 SUPPORT AIRCRAFT, ENGAGED IN STRIKES AGAINST TARGETS IN THE IMMEDIATE HANOI AREA. ONE B-52 (ROSE 01) WAS SHOT DOWN BY SURFACE-TO-AIR MISSILES LAUNCHED BY AN UNIDENTIFIED HANOI AREA SAM BATTALION AT APPROXIMATELY 2210Z. NORTH VIETNAMESE AIR SURVEILLANCE FACILITIES REPORTED TRACKING REFLECTIONS OF A FLIGHT OF THREE B-52S BELIEVED TO REPRESENT ROSE FLIGHT. THE AIRCRAFT WERE INITIALLY REFLECTED AT 20-48N 104-10E AT 2202Z, INGRESSING NORTH VIETNAM AIRSPACE. THE FLIGHT PROCEEDED TO 21-02N 104-17E AT 2206Z AND THEN TURNED ONTO A NORTHEASTERLY HEADING TO 21-15N 105-03E AT 2213Z. THE AIRCRAFT THEN FLEW EASTWARD TO 21-12N 105-23E AT 2214Z. 21-15N 105-50E AT 2216Z. TRACK CONTINUITY WAS THEN LOST AND THIS FLIGHT WAS LAST REFLECTED AT 20-28N 104-50E AT 2219Z, HEADING SOUTHWEST TOWARD THE NVN/LAOS BORDER. NVN AIR SURVEILLANCE FACILITIES REFLECTED STILL ANOTHER FLIGHT OF HOSTILE AIRCRAFT, IDENTIFIED AS FOUR SMALL TYPES, NOTED BETWEEN 2135Z AND 2221Z. THE INITIAL REFLECTION OF THIS FLIGHT WAS AT 21-15N 104-50E, HEADED NORTHEAST TO 21-25N 105-23E AT 2136Z. THESE AIRCRAFT THEN FLEW SOUTHWARD, TO 21-05N 105-50E AT 2144Z, 20-52N 105-23E AT 2150Z. AT THIS POINT THE RADAR STATION LOST CONTINUITY ON THE FLIGHT. THE NEXT REFLECTION BEING AT 20-22N 105-17E AT 2205Z, THE FLIGHT SUDDENLY REVERSED COURSE, HEADING DUE NORTH TO 20-52N 105-17E AT 2208Z. AFTER A SINGLE ORBIT IN THIS GENERAL AREA, THE FLIGHT TURNED AND FLEW SOUTHWEST TO A LAST REFLECTED POSITION OF 19-50N 105-03E AT 2221Z. AT 2210Z, AN UNIDENTIFIED SAM BATTALION, PROBABLY LOCATED TO THE SOUTH OF HANOI, REPORTED THAT A B-52 HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN. NO FURTHER AMPLIFYING DATA WAS PASSED. BETWEEN 2350Z, 18 DECEMBER AND 0002Z, 19 DECEMBER A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE 264TH SAM REGIMENTAL CONTROLLER AND SUBORDINATE BATTALION 78 LOCATED TO THE SOUTH AND WEST OF HANOI, DISCLOSED THAT, SOME PILOT WAS CAPTURED ALIVE. HE WAS CAPTURED AT THE AAA UNIT TO THE WEST (OF THE 264TH SAM REGIMENT, HANOI AREA). NEITHER THE IDENTITY OF THE PILOT NOR THE TYPE AIRCRAFT WAS REVEALED. DURING THE 2121Z 2221Z PERIOD, TWO MIG-21'S -- ONE A FISHBED J MODEL, SCRAMBLED FROM HANOI GIA LAM AIRFIELD IN REACTION TO THE STRIKES. THE J MODEL REACTED FIRST AND EXPENDED ONE MISSILE AT 2152Z, APPARENTLY WITHOUT SUCCESS. THIS MIG WAS JOINED BY THE OTHER GIA LAM MIG-21 AT 2157Z, AND BOTH WERE VECTORED TOWARD A B-52, APPROACHING TO WITHIN EIGHT NM OF THEIR TARGET. THE MIG'S WERE UNABLE TO ATTACK (FOR UNIDENTIFIED REASONS) AND ONE REPORTED BATTLE DAMAGE AT 2214Z (THE CAUSE OF THIS BATTLE DAMAGE WAS NOT DISCLOSED). ALTHOUGH GIA LAM AIRFIELD WAS BURNING, ONE OF THE MIG'S LANDED THERE AT 2238Z, THE OTHER MIG WAS NOT NOTED IN LANDING COMMUNICATIONS. COMMENT COLLATERAL SOURCES REPORTED THAT ROSE WPQ HAD BEEN SHOT DOWN AT 2213Z. THE AREA OF THE SHOOTDOWN IS UNKNOWN. THE STATUS OF THE CREW MEMBERS HAS NOT BEEN DETERMINED. ANY ADDITIONAL REPORTING WILL BE DONE IN A SEPARATE SERIES. 840 00655 NNNN

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